

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-01 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

/055 W

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R 301600Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 894

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

DIA WASHDC

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMCONSUL OPORTO

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: MDP/CDE LEADERSHIP RECOMMENDS CONVERSION OF ORGANIZATION  
INTO A PARTY, PARTICIPATION IN MARCH ELECTIONS

SUMMARY: AT RECENT TOP-LEVEL MEETING OF MDP LEADERS  
RECOMMENDATION WAS MADE TO TURN MOVEMENT INTO POLITICAL  
PARTY AND RUN IN UPCOMING ELECTIONS. NOVEMBER CONGRESS  
OF MDP WILL MAKE FINAL DECISION, WHICH IS LIKELY TO BE  
FAVORABLE TO RECOMMENDATION. BOTH MES AND PS HAVE  
CRITICIZED MOVE, WHICH IF CARRIED OUT STANDS TO BENEFIT  
PCP AND CUT INTO ELECTORAL STRENGTH OF PS. END SUMMARY.

1. MEETING IN LISBON ON OCTOBER 27, MOVIMENTO DEMOCRATICO  
PORTUGUES (MDP) NATIONAL LEADERSHIP ORGAN (KNOWN AS THE  
"NATIONAL ENCOUNTER," AND WHICH IS COMPOSED OF ABOUT  
100 TOTAL DELEGATES FROM EACH OF THE 22 ADMINISTRATIVE  
DISTRICTS IN THE COUNTRY) DECIDED TO RECOMMEND TO THE  
UPCOMING MDP CONGRESS THAT IT CONVERT THE MOVEMENT INTO  
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A POLITICAL PARTY IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE

IN THE MARCH CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS. THE CONGRESS WILL TAKE PLACE NOVEMBER 1-3 ON LISBON PREMISES OF SUPERIOR TECHNICAL INSTITUTE, WITH SOME 4000 PERSONS EXPECTED TO ATTEND. IF MDP/CDE BECOMES PARTY AS EXPECTED, IT WILL HAVE TO APPROVE PARTY STATUTES AND DRAFT PROGRAM FOR GOVERNMENT IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH NEW DRAFT ELECTORAL LAW (WHICH ALLOWS ONLY PARTIES AND NOT MOVEMENTS LIKE MDP TO RUN CANDIDATES IN ELECTIONS.) (THE NATIONAL ENCOUNTER, IN ANTICIPATION OF FAVORABLE DECISION BY ITS CONTRESS, DISCUSSED POSSIBLE STATUTES AS WELL AS DEBATED A GOVERNMENTAL PROGRAM.)

2. IN EXPLAINING RECOMMENDATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, GILBERTO LINDIM RAMOS, A MEMBER OF THE MDP'S EXECUTIVE BOARD, TOLD JOURNALISTS THAT "POLITICAL FUTURE OF PORTUGAL WILL BE DECIDED IN THESE ELECTIONS" AND NATIONAL ENCOUNTER WANTS MDP PARTICIPATION IN THE ELECTIONS TO BE A DECISIVE FACTOR IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST REACTION. "UNITARY, DEMOCRATIC, AND POPULAR INTERESTS DEMAND THAT THE MDP RUN IN ELECTIONS."

3. PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST PARTY, WHICH HAS LONG OPPOSED PARTICIPATION BY THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED MDP IN ELECTIONS, EXPRESSED ITS DISPLEASURE WITH MDP'S DECISION BY HAVING MEMBER OF ITS POLITICAL COMMITTEE WRITE AN ARTICLE IN REPUBLICA TITLED "15 REFLECTIONS ON MDP." THE ARTICLE CHARGES THAT MDP IS COMMUNIST-DOMINATED "UNITARY FORCE" AND NOT TRUE PARTY WITH ITS OWN IDEAS INDEPENDENT FROM THOSE OF PCP. IT IS, THEREFORE, SECOND PCP, WHICH IF IT RUNS IN NEXT ELECTIONS, WILL AMOUNT TO A DISGUISED DOUBLE REPRESENTATION FOR PCP. ARTICLE CONCLUDES WITH HOPE THAT GOP AND ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT WILL NOT LET THIS "FALSE POLITICAL PARTY" PARTICIPATE IN MARCH ELECTIONS. AS WAS TO BE EXPECTED, ARTICLE HAS DRAWN STORM OF CRITICISM FROM MDP ALONG WITH CHARGES THAT ITS AUTHOR HAS AIDED REACTIONARY FORCES WITH HIS "INSIDIOUS SECTARIAN AND DEVISIONIST" CHARGES.

4. THE MES (LEFT SOCIALIST MOVEMENT), WHICH IS INDEPENDENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF SOCIALIST PARTY AND ACTIVE IN THE MDP, HAS WARNED MDP THAT IF IT CONVERTS INTO PARTY MES WILL WITHDRAW ITS MILITANTS. THE MES DOES NOT OPPOSE ITS CONVERSION INTO PARTY, HOWEVER, BUT DOES WONDER WHAT POLITICAL NICHE IT PLANS TO OCCUPY. IN ITS OPINION MDP IS PARTICULARLY USEFUL IN ITS PRESENT FORM AS AN ORGANIZATION TO UNITE DIVERSE LEFTIST GROUPS (AND NOT BY IMPLICATION AS ANOTHER LEFTIST SECTARIAN PARTY.)

5. IN PREPARATION FOR THE MDP CONGRESS SOME 800 LOCAL POLITICAL SESSIONS HAVE BEEN HELD THROUGHOUT COUNTRY IN RECENT WEEKS. A NUMBER OF GOVERNMENT MINISTERS HAVE PARTICIPATED, INCLUDING SECRETARIES OF STATE FOR FISHERIES (MARIO RUIVO), LABOR (CARLOS CARVALHAS), AGRICULTURE (ESTEVEZ BELO), AND SPORTS (AVELAS NUNES).

6. COMMENT: THERE IS LITTLE CHANCE THAT MDP WILL NOT BECOME A PARTY AND PARTICIPATE IN THOSE AREAS OF THE COUNTRY SUCH AS RURAL NORTH WHERE PCP IS WEAKEST AND MDP CONCOMITANTLY STRONGER AND LESS SUBJECT TO LOCAL SUSPICIONS THAN COMMUNISTS. BEFORE EVENTS OF SEPTEMBER 28 IT APPEARED SOCIALISTS AND THE PPD WOULD SUCCEED IN BRINGING ABOUT DISSOLUTION OF MDP, OR AT LEAST KEEP IT OUT OF ELECTIONS. HOWEVER, SINCE THAT TIME IT HAS ENJOYED A RESURGENCE, BROUGHT ON IN PART BY VERBAL SUPPORT FOR IT BY PRIME MINISTER GONCALVES AND AFM LEADERS, (WHO ARE GRATEFUL FOR ITS SUPPORT IN SEP 28 CRISIS AND FOR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION ITS MILITANTS FURNISHED AFM), AND BECAUSE ITS NATURAL OPPONENTS FELT CONSTRAINED IN ATTACKING IT BECAUSE OF MDP CHARGES THAT JUST SUCH ATTACKS HAD EMBOLDENED RIGHT AND MADE POSSIBLE THE "FASCIST" COUP ATTEMPT ON 28TH.

7. THE MDP'S EXISTENCE AS A PARTY WILL UNDOUBTEDLY CUT INTO SOCIALIST VOTING STRENGTH AND TO LESSER EXTENT PPD'S, AND MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR FORMER TO REMAIN A UNIFIED PARTY. IF THE MDP DECIDES TO DISPUTE ELECTIONS THE PCP WILL PROBABLY MAINTAIN A LOW LEADERSHIP PROFILE IN IT IN HOPES OF ATTRACTING MODERATE ELECTORAL SUPPORTERS WHO WOULD NOT VOTE PCP. THE PPD AND PS IN TURN CAN BE EXPECTED TO ATTEMPT TO CONVINCE VOTERS THAT MDP IS IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FACT NOTHING BUT PCP FRONT.  
SCOTT

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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